

# News Release

# Senator Pete V. Domenici

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAY 1, 2000

## DOMENICI CONFIRMS FINAL OKAY FOR ASSIGNING TWO NEW ASSISTANT U.S. ATTORNEYS TO ALBUQUERQUE

### Added Federal Prosecutors to Focus on Fighting Gun Violence

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Senator Pete Domenici today confirmed that final approval has been granted to assign two new Assistant U.S. Attorneys to the law enforcement ranks in Albuquerque, culminating his year-long effort to increase federal prosecution of gun crimes in New Mexico.

Final congressional approval has been gained for the Department of Justice (DOJ) proposal naming Albuquerque as one of 15 high crime cities and districts that will receive two additional Assistant U.S. Attorneys and other resources to boost firearms prosecutions.

Domenici, a Senate Appropriations Committee member, last year gained language in the FY 2000 Commerce, Justice, State and the Judiciary (CJS) Appropriations Act specifying Albuquerque be awarded a portion of \$7.1 million in federal resources specifically provided to increase firearms prosecutions nationwide. In providing the funding, Congress required that the Senate and House CJS Appropriations Subcommittee approve DOJ plans for utilizing the resources. Both subcommittees have provided the requisite approval, freeing DOJ to begin placing the new prosecutors in Albuquerque and around the nation.

Domenici said Albuquerque's two new Assistant U.S. Attorneys will be allocated for two-year terms, to be renewed following an evaluation and if funding is available. In addition, Albuquerque will receive \$75,000 to be used for state/local overtime, contract employees, training and other similar purposes.

"The new prosecutors and additional funding will help the U.S. Attorneys office fight the battle against gun violence in Albuquerque. The sad reality is that firearm deaths are on the rise in the Duke City. Hopefully, these two new federal prosecutors will help turn the tide against the violence in Albuquerque and New Mexico," Domenici said.

According to 1998 DOJ statistics provided, Albuquerque ranked as the 33rd most violent city nationwide based on firearms homicide rates per 100,000. This, coupled with Albuquerque's rising firearms homicide rate per 100,000, from 6.73 in 1997 to 6.86 in 1998, made Albuquerque a top

candidate for inclusion in the DOJ plan.